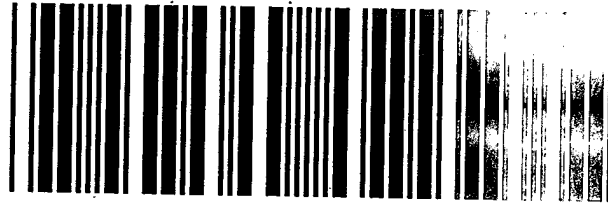


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MAR 5 1953

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** The Under Secretary of State  
The Deputy Secretary of Defense

**SUBJECT:** Brainwashing

1. I have called two meetings on this subject, the first on Saturday morning, 23 February, and the second on Tuesday morning, 3 March. The meetings were attended by Dr. Detlev W. Bronk, President, Johns Hopkins University; representatives of the PSB Staff, Department of State, Department of Defense, the Army (Psywar office), the Air Force (PW office), and CIA.

2. The main purpose of the two meetings was to explore available facts and to obtain Dr. Bronk's reactions to the possibility of forming a medical or scientific, or combined group, to examine the facts and issue a statement regarding the feasibility of brainwashing procedures.

3. At the 3 March meeting the movie, "Documentary Evidence of the International Scientific Commission for the Investigation of U.S. Bacteriological Warfare", was shown with particular attention to the confessions of the four U.S.A.F. fliers, Lts. Knoch, Quinn, Niles and O'Neill. There was also some discussion of the recent confessions of the two Marine Corps fliers, Col. Schwable and Major Hley. These confessions had been read over the Peiping radio and we had the transcripts at the meetings. Since the meetings, it has been established that the confessions were in fact read and were not, as suggested, tape recordings of the voices of the two Marine officers.

4. At the end of the second meeting the following points were agreed upon:

a. Dr. Bronk will immediately start to form a group of doctors, numbering 5 or 6 at the most, and consisting mainly of Americans but including other nationalities if desirable. Speed was recognized as necessary not only in forming the committee, but having it reach some useful conclusions. Names suggested by Dr. Bronk were:

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Dr. Robert F. Leeb - Columbia University

Dr. John C. Whitehorn - Johns Hopkins University

Dr. William C. Menninger - The Menninger Foundation

Dr. Wilder G. Penfield - McGill University

b. As soon as this group is formed all available facts will be presented to it including the film, evidence from the Department of Defense, and names of persons who have been subjected to brainwashing treatment in China, such as Hayes, Hunter, and Bryant. Bryant, you may remember, is the Shanghai lawyer who recently wrote of his experiences in the "Saturday Evening Post". He is now in this country.

c. An interdepartmental working group was formed consisting of representatives of PDB (Dr. Craig, Chairman), Defense (William Godel), State (Mr. Ritter in Mr. Phillips' office), and CIA [redacted]. This group will collect all available facts and prepare itself to service Dr. Bronk's group when formed. The first report of this working group is attached.

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d. State and Defense will consider an appropriate statement for release in the near future and make recommendations as to the appropriate person, agency, or department to make the release. This statement is attached to the Report of the working group.

5. I should like to raise the following additional points for discussion:

a. Some of the material which might be relevant to the work of Dr. Bronk's committee may be classified, and some of it may be highly sensitive. We must determine who should decide whether or not such material should in fact be presented.

b. A quick search in CIA shows little scientific evidence to support brainwashing. There is rather massive evidence in the form of case reports and circumstantial evidence which leads to the conclusion that it is not a difficult matter, given the time, to force almost anyone to make an inaccurate statement, provided that the time at which the statement is to be made can be controlled and the individual is not required to continue his willingness to lie for a long period.

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c. In the light of b., do we want the Bronk committee to consider the length of time for which brainwashing may be effective? It would seem that the evidence on this point is inconclusive and therefore, long consideration might be required before any answer could be attempted. I suggest that we eliminate this point unless it can be determined within a reasonably short period of time, and I recommend that we adopt Dr. Bronk's suggestion to continue his committee in being for the consideration of this subject over an indefinite term.

**SIGNED**

**ALLEN W. DULLES**  
Director

Attachment

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O/DCI [ ] - 5 Mar 53  
copies 1 thru 6 to DCI to distribute by hand to PSB members  
#7 - C/PP  
8 - SIGNER  
9 - SIGNER

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